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Thesis in Architecture

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DESIGN FOR A COUNTY COURT HOUSE

BY

WYMER W. MAXWELL

THESIS

For the Degree of Bachelor of Science

in Architecture

College of Engineering

University of Illinois

PRESENTED, JUNE, 1907

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June 1 1907

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY

Wymer W. Maxwell

ENTITLED DESIGN FOR A COUNTY COURT HOUSE

IS APPROVED BY ME AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF Bachelor of Science in Architecture

John W. Case
Instructor in Charge.

APPROVED: N. Clifford Ricker

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF Architecture

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The site is assume to be a rectangular lot having streets on three sides. The jail and heating plant are located upon the fourth side. The lot is filled until it is about two feet higher than the street walks. The lot is surrounded by a stone wall as shown on the plans and elevations.

The general shape and character of the buidling is such that it is well adopted to the Classic style. A base is formed by the first story; the second and third stories forming a sort of shaft. The whole is crowned by a balustrade, no roof being visible.

The front elevation consists of a group of three masses, the center one predominating. In order to get the effect of piers, the end sections of each mass are built of stone courses of two widths and with recessed joints. The ends of the build- are shaped so as to get the effect of two masses with a connecting link.

The material used is sawed white Bedford limestone which is well adapted to buildings of Classic style.

The basement is used for public toilet rooms, store rooms, vaults for storing documents not much in use, janitors rooms and fresh air and fan rooms. The basement is reached by means of two stairways from the main corridor on the first floor and by an exterior stairs at the back of the building. The basement vaults have doors in the basement and may be entered from the vaults situated directly above. All the rooms in the basement are of an inferior nature and do not need much light, hence the basement windows are small.

The main entrance to the building is through three large arched doorways which lead into a large vestibule. The vestibule is separated from the corridor by a glass partition in order to admit light into the corridor. From the vestibule one enters the large central corridor, 16 feet wide, which is large enough so that it will not become too crowded. There are two side entrances which also lead into this central corridor. The corridor surrounds a monumental rotunda, 36' X 36', in which are placed stairs leading to the floors above. On the first floor are placed the rooms which are most used by the public. In one corner are placed the Circuit Clerks office, private office and vault. The public space is divided from the working space by a counter. The entrance to this room is so located that it can be easily reached from the main corridor or from the side entrance.

The County Clerk's office is on this floor and in arrangement is similar to the Circuit Clerk's office.

The Treasurer's office opens directly from the main corridor. In connection with this is a vault, a private office and a small toilet room.

The County Court room is on this floor. Convenient to the court room are placed the judge's rooms, attorney's rooms, witness rooms, toilets, etc.

The Sheriff's offices may be reached by a branch corridor from the main corridor or through a back, or prisoners entrance. A prisoners waiting room is placed near the sheriff's office. A stairway leads from the prisoners entrance to a

prisoner's waiting room on the second floor.

The second floor is used for the Circuit Court and the County Supervisor's. The circuit court room is a rectangular room 40'- 0" X 60'- 0" extending two stories in height. As it is centrally located, having windows on but one side much difficulty was encountered in getting it sufficiently well lighted. This was accomplished by placing the major axis of the room parallel to the light, setting the outside wall in, using columns, forming a colonade along its entire length. This arrangement also gave a good exterior effect. Placed convenient to the court room are the judges offices. The judge's public office opens onto the colonade. The colonade is also reached by two corridors which branch off of the main corridor.

In connection with the court room are two witness rooms, two jury rooms, and a prisoner's waiting room. Opposite the court room is the law library and smoking rooms. A colonade is at this end of the building also. In one corner are the petit jury rooms. Opening directly from the grand corridor are the supervisor's rooms. The main room is well lighted and large enough for a county of 50,000 population.

Connected with this room are two committee rooms, a road commissioner's office and a room for the board of electors.

The rooms not much used by the public are placed on the third floor. In one corner is the grand jury room connected with which are the witness rooms.

A G.A.R. hall with two ante rooms occupy the center of the main front. By placing the County Superintendent of Schools'

rooms opposite the G.A.R. hall a well lighted room was obtained for the examination room off of which open the superintendent's public and private offices.

The County Surveyor's office and drafting room are placed in one corner of this floor. The drafting room is long and narrow and well lighted. The rotunda which extends through three stories is lighted by a sky-light, thus the corridors and main stairs on each floor are well lighted. By using marble for the corridor floors, wainscott ans stairs, a very decorative as well as monumental effect is obtained.

The building is lighted by electricity furnished by a lighting company. All entrances are well lighted by bronze wall lamps and by bronze candelabra.

Ventilation is secured by the use of two fans, one at each end of the building. The motive power is electricity and each fan is run independently of the other.

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